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SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-third year

Identical letters dated 5 August 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council

In reference to the statement by the President of the Security Council of 14 July 1998 (S/PRST/1998/22), I have the honour to forward herewith a note dated 5 August 1998 addressed to the Secretariat of the United Nations by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic State of Afghanistan.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council and of the General Assembly.

(Signed) Dr. A. G. Ravan FARHĀDI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex

Letter dated 5 August 1998 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan addressed to the Secretariat of the United Nations

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic State of Afghanistan presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the United Nations and has the honour to communicate the following.

The Taliban's latest assaults in north-western Afghanistan, carried out by the Pakistani military intelligence service and its paramilitary personnel, once again reveal the true nature of Pakistan's wicked intentions for regional hegemony. In this regard, the statement by the President of the Security Council (S/PRST/1998/22) issued on 14 July 1998, two days after the invasion of Maymana, the capital of north-western Faryab Province, by the Taliban, has been totally disregarded by the aggressors.

After the Pakistani nuclear explosions in May, only 20 kilometres from the southern Afghan province of Helmand, it became clear that Pakistan was and still is pursuing military adventures throughout the region. The instigation of instability created by the nuclear explosions brings to light a Pakistani aim to expand its politico-military influence in the region.

According to reliable intelligence reports by the Islamic State of Afghanistan, the Pakistani military institution and its military intelligence service have, for some time, been engaged in renewed efforts to recruit and train new personnel to be subsequently dispatched into Afghanistan. For the past few months, the heavy shipments of military supplies and logistics to the Taliban have also been apparent. Purchase of new heavy armament consignments from Ukrainian arms dealers airlifted through Sharja airport in the United Arab Emirates, alleged to have been shipped to Taliban headquarters in southern Afghanistan, has been confirmed by the media. As such, the number of Pakistani paramilitary personnel in Afghanistan has steadily increased.

In fact, observers have been convinced that the forcible relocation of all non-governmental organizations in Kabul, which caused many of these agencies to stall their operations in Afghanistan, was a result of the fact that some staff members had, on numerous occasions, seen foreign non-civilian citizens. This has also affected the status of foreign journalists, encouraged not to visit Taliban-held territories.

The planned objective behind the Pakistani actions has been its desire to install in Kabul, broadening its authority throughout Afghanistan, a subservient protectorate state, in the fancy of realizing the "strategic depth" for which it has prayed for so long. Pakistan, being placed under time pressure, is growing weary of the situation on its eastern border and finds its immediate task to be the subjugation of Afghanistan. In fact, the Pakistani Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Gohar Ayub Khan, confessed, in the Egyptian daily Al-Ahram, the Pakistani desire for attaining "strategic depth" in Afghanistan (see S/1998/630 of 10 July 1998).

The Islamic State of Afghanistan strongly believes in a peaceful solution to the Afghan problem. Its participation in the Islamabad preparatory meeting in April, laying the ground for the Ulema (religious scholars) Commission, supervised by the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan, abruptly and unilaterally abandoned by the Taliban under the direct order of the Pakistani military intelligence service, is a manifestation of that fact. Despite numerous international appeals for the resumption of the talks, the Taliban showed no desire to continue face-to-face talks.

The Taliban intransigence, owing to their conviction in a military solution, is indicative of the Pakistani military determination to dominate Afghanistan. As such, any and all efforts culminating in a peaceful Afghan solution have been intentionally thwarted. It was not to anyone's surprise that the Taliban did not only reject attending the Intra-Afghan grand meeting of 18 July 1998 in Bonn, Germany, striving to initiate what it hopes to be the traditional Grand Assembly, Loya Jirga, but, in fact, one week earlier, condemned the gathering. Subsequently, it launched major operations in north-western Afghanistan.

In the Taliban latest attacks and military rule in certain parts of north-western Afghanistan, large numbers of the civilian population - selected based on their ethnic background - have been forced out of their homes, airlifted and relocated in Kabul and Kandahar as hostages. Such heinous crimes against humanity presents a twofold reality: the Taliban do not and cannot trust the people; and the people in turn, are suspicious of the Taliban. Even in southern Afghanistan, where most of the population belongs to the Taliban's ethnic group, there is a great deal of resistance against their clique-imposed forced military conscription.

By using ethnic differences in Afghanistan, the Pakistani military intelligence service has made sure that one ethnic segment within the Afghan society can be used against another in a different part of the country, a phenomenon introduced in Afghanistan after the emergence of the Taliban.

Pakistan's intense diplomatic activities have been centred on covering its military operations in Afghanistan along with the Taliban. Unfortunately, numerous international circles, including the United Nations, have exhibited an unprecedented optimism about the Taliban's claim of a change of positions on numerous issues.

It has been hoped that accommodating the Taliban through appeasement would encourage them to resume peace talks and continue negotiations. Thus far, it has produced quite the opposite. Dismayingly, United Nations documents continue unjustly to equate all 'sides' to the conflict, without drawing a distinction between aggressive elements versus those that just defend themselves, in the face of Pakistani expansionist designs, for the benefit of their national sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The Pakistani military intelligence service has used this appeasement policy as an opportunity to further its hegemonic ambitions. The Islamic State of Afghanistan regrets the lack of attention given to the depth of the disaster originating from the blatant interference and intervention by the Pakistani

military intelligence service in the internal affairs of Afghanistan. As a result of the international community's shallow posture, without due regard for who engages in acts of aggression and who engages in acts of defence, "both sides to the conflict" have been equally addressed. This puts equal blame on both sides, which is not fair at all. In essence, such an equation emboldens the aggressor.

While its military units are stationed at the gates of Kabul and can easily proceed into the city, the Islamic State of Afghanistan prefers a peaceful solution to the conflict. The Islamic State of Afghanistan is of the conviction that the attainment of a peaceful negotiated settlement will not jeopardize lives of innocent Afghans and will bring about future integration of all ethnic groups and the rule of law.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, while expressing its deep regret in the face of renewed vast assaults by the Taliban, furthering the sufferings of the Afghan people and delaying an early return of peace to the country, still believes in a peaceful negotiated settlement of the Afghan problem.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic State of Afghanistan appeals to the United Nations and regional as well as other interested countries in the Afghan peace process to exert effective pressure on Pakistan to halt its aggressive adventurous policy towards Afghanistan. Pakistan must be inclined to join other neighbouring countries in their sincere and concerted endeavours to achieve a lasting and durable peace in Afghanistan.

Peace cannot be guaranteed in Afghanistan, even in the event that the Taliban mercenary group invades a greater part of our country. While resistance against the Taliban will continue unabated, only the peace process will suffer.